

# PATENT COOPERATION TREATY

From the  
INTERNATIONAL SEARCHING AUTHORITY

To:

see form PCT/ISA/220

PCT

## WRITTEN OPINION OF THE INTERNATIONAL SEARCHING AUTHORITY (PCT Rule 43bis.1)

Date of mailing  
(day/month/year) see form PCT/ISA/210 (second sheet)

Applicant's or agent's file reference  
see form PCT/ISA/220

### FOR FURTHER ACTION

See paragraph 2 below

International application No.  
PCT/IB2004/002754

International filing date (day/month/year)  
26.08.2004

Priority date (day/month/year)  
29.08.2003

International Patent Classification (IPC) or both national classification and IPC  
C12G3/12

Applicant  
YAMATOICHI BREWING COMPANY

**1. This opinion contains indications relating to the following items:**

- Box No. I Basis of the opinion
- Box No. II Priority
- Box No. III Non-establishment of opinion with regard to novelty, inventive step and industrial applicability
- Box No. IV Lack of unity of invention
- Box No. V Reasoned statement under Rule 43bis.1(a)(i) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement
- Box No. VI Certain documents cited
- Box No. VII Certain defects in the international application
- Box No. VIII Certain observations on the international application

**2. FURTHER ACTION**

If a demand for international preliminary examination is made, this opinion will usually be considered to be a written opinion of the International Preliminary Examining Authority ("IPEA"). However, this does not apply where the applicant chooses an Authority other than this one to be the IPEA and the chosen IPEA has notified the International Bureau under Rule 66.1bis(b) that written opinions of this International Searching Authority will not be so considered.

If this opinion is, as provided above, considered to be a written opinion of the IPEA, the applicant is invited to submit to the IPEA a written reply together, where appropriate, with amendments, before the expiration of three months from the date of mailing of Form PCT/ISA/220 or before the expiration of 22 months from the priority date, whichever expires later.

For further options, see Form PCT/ISA/220.

**3. For further details, see notes to Form PCT/ISA/220.**

Name and mailing address of the ISA:



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**Box No. I Basis of the opinion**

1. With regard to the language, this opinion has been established on the basis of the international application in the language in which it was filed, unless otherwise indicated under this item.
  - This opinion has been established on the basis of a translation from the original language into the following language , which is the language of a translation furnished for the purposes of international search (under Rules 12.3 and 23.1(b)).
2. With regard to any nucleotide and/or amino acid sequence disclosed in the international application and necessary to the claimed invention, this opinion has been established on the basis of:
  - a. type of material:
    - a sequence listing
    - table(s) related to the sequence listing
  - b. format of material:
    - in written format
    - in computer readable form
  - c. time of filing/furnishing:
    - contained in the international application as filed.
    - filed together with the international application in computer readable form.
    - furnished subsequently to this Authority for the purposes of search.
3.  In addition, in the case that more than one version or copy of a sequence listing and/or table relating thereto has been filed or furnished, the required statements that the information in the subsequent or additional copies is identical to that in the application as filed or does not go beyond the application as filed, as appropriate, were furnished.
4. Additional comments:

**WRITTEN OPINION OF THE  
INTERNATIONAL SEARCHING AUTHORITY**

International application No.  
PCT/IB2004/002754

**Box No. II Priority**

1.  The following document has not been furnished:

copy of the earlier application whose priority has been claimed (Rule 43bis.1 and 66.7(a)).

translation of the earlier application whose priority has been claimed (Rule 43bis.1 and 66.7(b)).

Consequently it has not been possible to consider the validity of the priority claim. This opinion has nevertheless been established on the assumption that the relevant date is the claimed priority date.

2.  This opinion has been established as if no priority had been claimed due to the fact that the priority claim has been found invalid (Rules 43bis.1 and 64.1). Thus for the purposes of this opinion, the international filing date indicated above is considered to be the relevant date.

3. Additional observations, if necessary:

**3. Additional observations, if necessary:**

**Box No. V Reasoned statement under Rule 43bis.1(a)(i) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement**

## 1. Statement

Novelty (N) Yes: Claims 1-5  
No: Claims

**Inventive step (IS)** Yes: Claims 1-5  
No: Claims

**Industrial applicability (IA)** Yes: Claims 1-5  
No: Claims

## 2. Citations and explanations

see separate sheet

**Re Item V**

**Reasoned statement with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement**

1. Reference is made to the following document:

D1: PATENT ABSTRACTS OF JAPAN vol. 0060, no. 85 (C-103), 22 May 1982 (1982-05-22) & JP 57 016689 A (SAKURA UZUMAKI SYUZO KK), 28 January 1982 (1982-01-28)

2. Document D1, which is considered to represent the most relevant state of the art, discloses (cf. abstract) a method for manufacturing shochu having a unique flavour, from which the subject-matter of claim 1 differs in that the water, which is used for preparing the starter mash and which is added to the final mixture to be fermented contains 300-1000 mg / kg bicarbonate ions.
3. The subject-matter of claim 1 is therefore new (Article 33(2) PCT).
4. The problem to be solved by the present invention may be regarded as the provision of a method for preparing shochu, wherein the product has a unique and appealing taste.
5. The solution to this problem proposed in claim 1 of the present application is considered as involving an inventive step (Article 33(3) PCT) for the following reasons:  
Using water containing 300-1000 mg / kg bicarbonate ions for preparing shochu starter mash and/or shochu mash is not taught in the prior art. Further, starting from what is disclosed in the prior art, there appears to be no incentive to the skilled person to make use of water containing 300-1000 mg / kg bicarbonate ions in shochu production, because there is no reason to expect that using said water for preparing the shochu mash could improve the quality of the distillate.
6. Claims 2-5 are dependent on claim 1 and as such also meet the requirements of the PCT with respect to novelty and inventive step.